

WAIS *Inc*

Wide Area Information Servers

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

INTERNET

A group of linked computer networks spanning the globe. The Internet is both an international forum for communication and a vast library of information. There is no central authority or single organization running the Internet.

WORLD WIDE WEB (WWW)

A system for creating and browsing information on the Internet using hypertext links. In a hypertext document you can "point and click" on highlighted items which then point to text in another location, either locally or at a different site. Started as a project by CERN (the European Laboratory for Particle Physics) as a way to share and distribute research and information over the Internet.

GOPHER

A popular text-based system used for browsing Internet resources. By running the gopher client software, a user can access menus listing the information that is available at a gopher server located at a particular site on the Internet.

MOSAIC

A popular navigation tool used over the Internet as a client program to access World Wide Web servers. Mosaic allows users to browse hypertext documents at different sites on the "web".

NCSA

National Center for Supercomputing Applications, located at the University of Illinois at Urbana. The Mosaic program used for navigating the Internet was developed at NCSA.

NETSCAPE™

A popular Internet navigation program used for browsing hypertext documents on the World Wide Web.

NETSURFING

Using a browsing program such as Netscape or Gopher to scan the Internet to see what's out there or to look for new "hot" sites of information. It bears some resemblance to "channelsurfing" on a television set over multiple cable stations.

POINT AND CLICK

Using hypertext links, you can simply "point and click" on a highlighted text or graphic to move to another document.

CLIENT/SERVER

Two separate programs, usually running on different computers which allow for a sharing of resources over a network. One program, called the server, provides the resource (such as data or menus), and the other program, the client, is used to access that resource.

WAN (WIDE AREA NETWORK)

A number of Local Area Networks (LANs) connected together, usually via leased telephone lines. A LAN is a network where the computers are connected directly, usually through some type of cable.

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FACT SHEET: WAIS AND THE INTERNET

FINDING INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET

The Internet is used primarily as a means to communicate by electronic mail. It is also touted as a source of information for the world. Two important methods for navigating the Internet are browsing and searching. Software programs that let users browse, or "surf the net" are useful for understanding what is available on the Internet. Popular browsing programs include the text-based Gopher and a number of World Wide Web (WWW) browsers such as NCSA's Mosaic and Netscape™. Searching is another method people use to access information on the Internet. The WAIS technology provides powerful search capabilities for web browsers.

WORLD WIDE WEB AND HYPERTEXT

Use of the Web has been growing tremendously since the advent of simple browsing techniques. The WWW is a distributed hypertext program on the Internet. In a hypertext document users navigate by pointing and clicking on highlighted text which brings the user to various areas of interest. The WWW allows a hypertext browser to link documents in different locations on the Internet. WAIS allows users to go beyond pointing and clicking to natural language searches for information.

WAIS AND WWW AS COMPLIMENTARY TECHNOLOGIES

While browsing or "surfing" on the web is fun and interesting it does not take full advantage of the resources available on the Internet. WAIS technology adds powerful searching capabilities to the web, enabling users to move beyond simple browsing and on to specific information. WAIS allows users to "unlock the content behind the web".

Online newspapers provide a good example of how WAIS technology compliments the Word Wide Web. With a web browser, users can easily move around in various sections of the publication by pointing and clicking on hypertext links. WAIS allows the reader to search for specific articles about business, bylines by particular reporters, or their favorite sports team. The natural language search is made possible by the WAIS technology.

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What is the Internet?

The Internet is a complex global network consisting of thousands of independent computer networks run by private businesses, government agencies and educational and research institutions. Rather than a specific kind of network, however, the Internet is actually better thought of as a set of standards or protocols that lets various types of networks intercommunicate. The protocol, called TCP/IP, enables communications between public and private networks running over any medium: phone lines, traditional network lines, fiber, and even cable television wires and wireless systems. It is also computer-independent, running across PCs, Macintoshes, workstations and mainframes.

Across the Internet, users can share information, discuss topics of interest, research various subjects, or -- increasingly -- conduct commerce. Commercial use of the Internet promises to be an area of explosive growth in the years ahead, as companies look for ways to reach the increasing number of users online and to leverage the Internet to streamline and improve their business.

To gain access, a company or organization creates a local network using off-the-shelf technology from any of a number of vendors and then pays an Internet service provider for a link from that network to the Internet. An individual at home can also link his or her computer to the Internet through an Internet service provider. Once connected, an individual can communicate with any other person on the Internet, even if that person resides halfway around the world.

According to industry estimates, as many as 25 to 30 million people are on the Internet today, with the number growing at 10 to 15 percent per month. Today, the Internet spans all developed continents and countries. While more than fifty percent of current Internet users are in companies or organizations, the number of home users is growing rapidly.

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The Founders

Jim Clark and Marc Andreessen developed the idea for Netscape Communications Corporation in early 1994. They founded the company in April, and have since built a team of more than 75 employees. The company, which is privately held, is based in Mountain View, California -- in the heart of Silicon Valley.

Jim Clark is chairman and chief executive officer of Netscape Communications Corporation. Prior to founding the company, Clark was chairman of Silicon Graphics, Inc., a computer systems company he founded in 1982 that now has annual revenues of \$1.5 billion and is among the Fortune 500's fastest growing companies. Prior to founding Silicon Graphics, Clark was an associate professor at Stanford University, where he and a team of graduate students developed the initial technology on which Silicon Graphics was built.

Clark resigned as chairman of Silicon Graphics in February 1994 to undertake a new venture with the young programming team that created the widely-used NCSA Mosaic graphical user interface. Clark holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Utah.

Marc Andreessen is vice president of technology for Netscape Communications. Andreessen developed the idea for the NCSA Mosaic graphical user interface in the fall of 1992 while he was an undergraduate student at the University of Illinois and a staff member at the university's National Center for Supercomputing Applications in Champaign, Illinois. He created the friendly, easy-to-use navigational tool for the Internet with a team of students and staff at NCSA in early 1993.

In his role at Netscape Communications, Marc sets and oversees the technical direction of the company. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of Illinois in 1993.

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Our Mission

Netscape Communications Corporation intends to be the premier provider of open software that enables people and companies to exchange information and conduct commerce over the Internet and other global networks. The company was founded in April 1994 by Dr. James H. Clark, founder of Silicon Graphics, Inc., a Fortune 500 computer systems company; and Marc Andreessen, creator of the NCSA Mosaic software for the Internet.

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This document is intended to give you a complete map of the Web pages published at Netscape Communications.

Netscape Communications Home Page

- Killer Products
 - About the Free Release of Netscape
 - ▣ The License Agreement
 - ▣ How to Get It
 - ▣ Ordering Information
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Other Pages

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 - ▣ [Netscape Communications at Comdex](#)

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WAISgate

WAIS Inc. has introduced a new World Wide Web to WAIS gateway called WAISgate. This tool allows WAIS server administrators to customize WWW user interface to their WAIS databases. We ask that you visit our home page at <http://www.wais.com> and submit comments on how the software may continue to be enhanced. We ask that you please try:

- * directory of servers <http://www.wais.com/directory-of-servers.html>
- * WWW news group <http://www.wais.com/comp.infosystems.www.html>
- * WAIS news group <http://www.wais.com/comp.infosystems.wais.html>
- * gopher news group <http://www.wais.com/comp.infosystems.gopher.html>
- * West's Legal Directory <http://www.wais.com/Wests-Legal-Directory.html>
- * Other WAIS servers registered in the directory of servers.
 <http://www.wais.com/wais-dbs/>

Please note: WAISgate requires a Web viewer that handles forms (such as Mosaic 2.x). The features of WAISgate are:

- * Ability to access local and remote WAIS databases.
- * Multi-type documents with associated icons for each document format.
- * Table-lookup conversion from WAIS Types to MIME Context Types.
- * Fielded search for commercial WAIS databases.
- * Single-step processing: search of directory-of-servers, to database search, and to document retrieval.

Some examples of the use of WAISgate are:

- 1) Visit **directory of servers**. Enter the search term "Smithsonian" and select the "smithsonian-pictures.src" database. Next, enter the search term: "gor*". (The "*" is an example of using right truncation.) Select either the text, the thumbnail image, or the full image documents for retrieval.
- 2) To try a fielded search, visit: **www news group**, **wais news group**, or **gopher news group**. These are HTML pages for searching the Gopher, WAIS, and WWW newsgroup archives, respectively, using the commercial WAIS server. "Complete Text Search Terms" is where you may enter your WAIS query. If you wish to restrict your search to specific fields within the newsgroup archive, such as "subject" or "from", enter your search terms in the corresponding search box. When you have completed entering in your search terms, use the "Submit Query" box to process the search.

WAIS Inc. would like to express a special thank you to Francois Schiettecatte and the Smithsonian Institute for the use of the Smithsonian Pictures Database, and to Steven E. Brener for the Perl Library routines. Thanks to the NCSA for the public domain HTTP daemon and the associated icons. This will run as a free service on the Web. Please send comments to waisgate@wais.com